

Ticket to Work/Work Incentives Improvement Act
Medicaid Infrastructure Grant
Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2003

Members in Attendance: Nina Davenport, Tracy DuPree, Robert “Red” Foster, Terry Hardy, Bill Heavilin, Lisa Erquiaga, Paul Gowins, Robin Renshaw, Robert Simola, Alyce Thompson, Kimberli Varé and Gillian Wells.

Members Not in Attendance: Ingrid Holm-Garibay, Kimberli Varé (afternoon sessions only) and Paul Gowins (morning sessions only).

Staff: John Alexander, Linda James and Mary Jackson.

I. Roll Call – Housekeeping:

John Alexander began the meeting by calling roll. It was determined that a quorum was present. The group was given travel information for March’s Advisory Group meeting and the Legislative Reception. John requested all members to give their travel request to Linda James by the end of today’s meeting.

II. January Meeting Minutes Approval:

Co-chairman Bob Simola asked the group for any changes or corrections to the minutes. Kimberli Varé proposed a motion to accept the minutes as written. Nina Davenport seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

III. Staff Projects Status Update:

a. Section 1619 Outreach

Linda James gave an update on the printing of the 1619 brochures. As the legislature is currently in session, State Printing is backlogged. The printing date for the brochures is February 26, 2003. To date, the MIG staff has received 70 orders for posters and brochures. John Alexander added the orders would be sent out by the next Advisory Group meeting. The group suggested staff contact Western Nevada Community College (WNCC) Educational Department as part of the outreach. Linda informed the group that English and Spanish versions of the 1619 Consumer letters will be printed on February 26, 2003. The response date on the letters was changed to March 31, 2003 to accommodate printing delays. The mailing list of approximately 14,000 SSI/Medicaid recipients for the letters has been secured from the Welfare Division.

b. “Ticket Team” brochure for Consumers – Development Update

Mary Jackson updated the group on the Ticket Team’s response to their request for development of a consumer “Ticket to Work” brochure. The Ticket Team agreed to develop the brochure and requested guidance from the group regarding specific information to be included in the brochure and distribution methods. The team also wanted to verify funding support for printing and distribution from the Advisory Group. John Alexander informed the group that funding support through the grant was possible.

The group requested the brochure target all ticket consumers and include general information on the “Ticket Program”. They requested the Ticket Team develop a distribution strategy for their review taking into consideration the following suggestions: secure a list of ticket holders from ENs for mailing of the brochure; give brochures to ENs to give to their consumers; agencies represented on the Ticket Team distribute to their consumers; and provide brochures to other ticket holder service providers to give to their consumers. The group also requested an anticipated date of completion of the brochure from the Ticket Team. Mary informed the Advisory Group that the next Ticket Team meeting is February 24, 2003; she would share this information and secure a completion date for the brochure.

c. “Partners for Profits” Conference

Mary Jackson informed the group that the conference development is pending completion of the survey by the Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Kitti Barth with the Governor’s Committee shared with the group that her staff has completed 80 surveys out of the 200 selected survey participants. Kitti briefed the group on the make-up of the survey population and intent of the survey. Kitti stated they are finding two basic categories of respondents. Category one, approximately 50% of those surveyed said they are interested but not sure what to do next. They are requesting more training on how to collaborate with other agencies, work on MOUs and develop partnerships. The second category, consist of the remaining 50%. These respondents stated they attend the conference at their supervisors request and do not have authority to make decisions regarding the Ticket Program. Linda Lueck, who is conducting the survey, is collecting the name of the contact person for these agencies. Kitti stated these individuals would be invited to the table to discuss becoming an employment network. The Governor’s Committee Advisory Board has approved the hiring of an events’ planner to assist the Governor’s Committee with the training/award ceremony program. Kitti stated she has contacted community-training centers to discuss partnering as their event planner. To date, Vienne Triggs with Easter Seals, Linda Miller with Opportunity Village and Yvonne Brooks with High Sierra Industries have agreed to meet and discuss this venture. John Alexander told the group the MIG staff would be searching for potential keynote speakers for this event and welcomes any recommendations. Robin Renshaw recommended Susan Daniels and Artie Nathan as possible speakers.

d. United Support Group Outreach Support

Mary Jackson reported that the United Support Group has received back 163 of the 2000 post cards distributed. The post card data is maintained in a database created by Mary and a copy of the data has been provided to Lee Brasted, United Support Group Founder. Lee plans to write a letter and attach a list of responders instead of mailing the actual cards to members of the legislature. He has requested support from the group with the printing and mailing of the letters. Mary will follow-up with him to complete this task Mary stated she had spoken with him last week and he is aware of the importance of completing this outreach.

e. HIWA Automated Support Development

John Alexander gave the group an update on the automated support development and merged in the HIWA policy development issues covered by the group in December and January. John stated the automated support process has begun. The focus has been on working with the Nevada State Welfare Division because they will be determining the eligibility for the HIWA applicants. A second portion to the automated support is the development of a premium payment subsystem. John has been working the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy (DHCFP) Accounting Unit. Discussions have focused on what is called the business process flow chart and the business rules that would accompany the flow chart. The purpose of these documents is to give a clear understanding of who is doing what in the process and the steps a person goes through when applying for HIWA. John stated the computer system development process is on schedule and they are moving towards the functional requirements. He hopes to have this completed by the end of March.

The group was asked to keep in mind that MIG staff were proceeding with this work although authority to implement a program has not yet been received. He stated moving forward with the automated system development work is appropriate use of the federal funds and would hopefully prevent this lengthy process from delaying implementation of the HIWA program if approved.

John gave the group a summary of his meeting held last week with the DHCFP Administration. The group's Emerging Policy issue recommendations and the Welfare Divisions prospective on these policies were discussed. DHCFP Administration agreed with the group's recommendations for the definition of employment and who would complete the disability determinations for HIWA applicants. They accepted the group's continuation of Medicaid eligibility recommendation with one exception. Rather than the extended Medicaid coverage being for six months once good cause was determined for continued eligibility it would be a three-month extension. The primary reason for this decision is the cost involved.

The next policy issue addressed was retroactive Medicaid coverage. The Advisory group had recommended three months of retroactive Medicaid coverage if an applicant was eligible prior to date of application. The administration reported this would cost \$1.7 million yearly. This was an expense the proposed Medicaid budget could not absorb. They decided no retroactive Medicaid coverage for HIWA applicants. Regarding the issue of premium payment and non-payment, the administration agreed with the group's recommendation; however, billing cycles must be defined.

John continued his summary with the issues that had arisen in discussions with the Welfare Division. The Welfare Division is requesting standardized allowances to the earned income disregards. They were concerned the monthly submittal of receipts would be labor intensive to both the Welfare Division and the consumer. In response, the MIG staff have initiated research to identify what other states are doing. The Advisory group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of standardized allowances for disregards. John informed the group that the administration has not made a decision on this topic. He continued with Welfare's perspective on a resource standard of \$15,000 and the resource exclusions. The Welfare Division recommended elimination of a resource standard. DHCFP Administration felt the recommendation from the Advisory group was the appropriate resource standard and exclusion definition. The other area the Welfare Division discussed was the frequency of eligibility reviews. They recommended annual re-determinations with monthly reporting of any changes. The Advisory Group recommended reviews every four months. DHCFP administration decided there should be an annual full re-determination of eligibility and a six-month positive report.

IV. Legislative Strategy

a. Advisory Group Member's Educational Contacts with Legislators

Each Advisory Group member updated the group regarding their contact with their assigned Legislative members. Paul Gowins reported that due to his recent accident he has been unable to contact the individuals assigned to him. Paul told the group that on 2-27-03 HIWA will be included in DHCFP's budget hearing. He stated the group should focus on the fifteen members of the Ways & Means Committee. Paul also stated that legislators now have limited time to meet with constituents and it may be best to "catch" them between meetings. John Alexander went over Igrid Holm-Garibay's assignments. Members of the Advisory Group had contacted all of her assigned legislators except three. Alyce said she would contact Assemblywoman Peggy Pierce and Senator Valerie Wiener. Red Foster volunteered to contact Assemblyman Marcus Conklin.

Paul Gowins suggested Red Foster deliver a bag containing HIWA promotional items (pen, button, notepad and water bottle) to each legislator. Gillian suggested adding a copy of the "Talking Points" to the bag. Red agreed to deliver the packages next week.

b. Planning Status Report on 3/12/03 Legislative Reception

Paul Gowins gave an update on the Legislative reception to be held March 12, 2003. He clarified the Reception time; it will be held from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Paul reported that two violinists will perform during the reception and catering arrangements are finalized. Todd Butterworth will be handling the invitations. Clarification was given that no promotional items will be distributed and Advisory Group members should not wear name tags, however HIWA buttons were o.k.

V. New Business

a. Advisory Group Meeting Attendance

Alyce Thomas responded to the Advisory Group's letter sent in January regarding attendance. She informed the group she was unable to attend meetings due to 47 days of hospitalization in December and January. Co-chairman Bob Simola requested that in the future she contact MIG staff if unable to attend a meeting. Co-chairman Bill Heavilin motioned that Alyce retain membership on the Advisory Group due to extenuating circumstances. Tracy DuPree seconded the motion. **The motion was approved by a majority vote with Alyce abstaining.**

Co-Chairman Bill Heavilin asked MIG staff if Ingrid Holm-Garibay responded to her attendance letter sent in January. Linda James reported that she called Ingrid several weeks ago and sent her two letters. No response has been received from Ingrid. The group expressed their concern of the lack of contact from Ingrid. Gillian Wells stated she felt each member has a responsibility to let the group know their status. Bill Heavilin made the motion that under the Advisory Group By-laws that Ingrid's position be declared vacant and MIG staff proceed to fill the vacancy. Gillian Wells seconded the motion. **The motion was approved by majority vote with one abstention.**

VI. Group Report

a. Gillian Wells- Transition Forum Meeting February 19, 2003

Gillian Wells gave the group an update on the Transition Forum meeting. Melanie Johnson, with the Rehabilitation Services Administration in Washington D.C., was the guest speaker. The meeting focused on MOU's and the interagency agreement between the Department of Education and Vocational Rehabilitation. Gillian stated the group is moving forward and assistance from other agencies is welcomed.

b. Alyce Thomas – Report on Meeting with Governor Guinn's Staff Member

Alyce Thomas reported that she had lunch with Jackie Brantley from the Governor's office. She stated that the Governor is behind the Medicaid Buy-In program. Alyce told the group Jackie's comments regarding the "Talking Points". Jackie said it was good but too lengthy. She suggested it be one page and larger print. Alyce reported some of the legislators had made similar comments. The group spent time re-designing the "Talking Points". Linda James completed a new draft, which was approved by the group. Linda James will send each group member 25 copies of the updated version tomorrow.

Other Discussion:

Kitti Barth, Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities Administrator, announced there is going to be a major change with their Administration. One of the recommendations in Senate Bill 513 is to move their agency from the Department of Labor and Industry to the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation. The proposed plan

includes renaming the agency the Office of Disability Employment Policy and combining their advisory board with the Vocational Rehabilitation Council. The combined council would also be renamed the Governor's Council on Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disability. Kitti stated she felt this was a positive move for the agency.

VII. Public Comment Period:

Jack Mayes, Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law Center stated that NDALC was following a number of assembly and senate bills. He reviewed each of the bills and provided a list to the group. Jack stated that having the Medicaid Buy-in mentioned in Senate Bill 137 was very positive for the HIWA program.

Mike Massie, Employment Specialist with Fallon Industries in Fallon, Nevada, shared his experiences with working with his consumer's families and the importance of the Medicaid Buy-in program to this population. He expressed support of the Ticket Team Brochure and requested he be provided with some for distribution to his consumers when available.

The meeting was adjourned.